

Message Text

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50

ACTION AID-59

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 L-03 EB-11 IGA-02 SWF-02 SP-03

SS-20 SPM-01 SCI-06 IO-09 EUR-25 FDRE-00 AGR-20 HEW-08

COME-00 OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-11 NSAE-00 PA-04

RSC-01 USIA-15 PRS-01 DRC-01 /214 W

----- 042025

R 121152Z AUG 74

FM AMEMBASSY COTONOU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6459

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY BAMAKO

AMEMBASSY LOME

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

UNCLAS COTONOU 1267

EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAID, EAGR, SENV, DM

SUBJ: DROUGHT EFFECTS IN DAHOMEY

REF A. STATE 156186 B. COTONOU 1199

1. DAHO-EXPRESS ARTICLE OF 12 AUG GIVES SUMMARY OF HOW DROUGHT HAS AFFECTED NORTHERN DAHOMEY. MAIN EFFECTS

ARE: (A) DROP IN

CORN, RICE AND COTTON PRODUCTION DUE TO "IRREGULAR AND INSUFFICIENT RAINFALL", (B) NOMAD CATTLE HERDERS NO LONGER ABLE GRAZE AS FAR NORTH AS BEFORE; IN ADDITION, MORE NIGERIANS HERDS ARE COMING SOUTH SEEKING FORAGE, THUS "TAXING THE AREAS ALREADY INADEQUATE FOR THE LOCAL HERDS ALONE" (THIS CORRESPONDS WITH REF B OBSERVATION; (C) FISHING IN NIGER RIVER IS OFF, CUTTING FOOD SUPPLIES FOR PEOPLE LIVING ON ITS BANKS; (D) RURAL COMMUNITIES NORMALLY SHORT OF WATER IN MARCH-APRIL BEFORE RAINY SEASON HAVE BEEN HARDER HIT THAN USUAL.

2. ARTICLE DOES GO ON TO NOTE SITUATION NOT NEARLY AS CRITICAL

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AS IN SAHEL, BUT WARNED THAT PROBLEMS OF LOWER FOOD PRODUCT-

ION, INADEQUATE WATER SUPPLIES, AND GENERAL SQUEEZE OF ECONOMIC RESOURCES COULD WORSEN AS RESULT OF "EXTENSION OF DESERTIFICATION PHENOMENA" FROM SAHEL INTO NORTHERN DAHOMEY.

3. COMMENT: THIS IS FIRST ARTICLE ON EFFECT OF DROUGHT IN DAHOMEY IN OFFICIAL PRESS. ALSO, PRES KEREKOU'S SPEECH AT CLOSING OF RECENT NATINAL SEMINAR CALLED FOR HIGHER AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION TO PREVENT "THE SAD SPECTACLE OF DISTRIBUTING FOODSTUFFS TO OUR HARD-WORKING PEOPLE." THUS, IT SEEMS THAT MRGD CLEARLY RECOGNIZES LIMITED EFFECTS OF DROUGHT ON NORTHERN DAHOMEY AND WOULD ACT QUICKLY IF SITUATION WORSENS.
GRAHL

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